

# REWRITE



## The Magazine of Effective Writing

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### WRITERS, CRITICS, AND WRITING

One of the most confused relationships in this profession of writing, and selling, is that between the writer and his critic. Few writers know clearly what they want to get, or have a right to expect from a good coach and teacher. And perhaps even fewer critics have thought through precisely their job in relation to a creative writer laboring with an artistic problem. At best this can be an unusually subtle human relationship. At its worst it often is a mercenary business deal in which both sides are thinking in terms of practical results; i. e., are trying to buy money and fame.

A former governor of Massachusetts is reported once to have kept insisting to a man who was trying to teach him the basic principles of good public speaking, that he get down to brass tacks and inform him of the nature of the "trick". "I know it is simply a neat trick," the governor explained, "and I am willing to pay well for it." That is the attitude of many writers, and it explains why they repeatedly fall easy victims of an inviting advertisement promoting a package, which seems to promise quick results, and a short cut to easy selling.

Like the governor, they fail to appreciate that the only commodity they have to sell lies deep within them. And that no critic, coach or loving, selfless teacher can give to them something to fill the void that may exist in their subconscious. All that any of us, who seek to counsel writers can do, is to shape for them their native talent and help them, through our greater experience, to heighten its own residual power. The fundamental fallacy of the so-called "critic-agent" is the theory that he can "touch up" and breathe life into a ms. that is essentially "dead". The best salesmen in the world cannot sell that product which does not inherently fill some obvious need.

Allene Corliss, who rose to great heights of brilliance at the Clark Writers' Conference, and was the "most out-giving human being I've ever met," as one enthusiastic author expressed it, repeatedly stressed this factor of inner content. "All I know," Mrs. Corliss wrote to me, "about writing is what has worked for me. The best thing we can do for them is to make them feel like writers, and go away believing in themselves & willing to work like hell at a very hard craft."

In her sessions she said, "There is never a right way and a wrong way of writing. Of course there are general rules based on commonsense and readers. But there is no right way of writing a particular story, except as an imaginative writer makes it seem the inevitable way of doing it." At one point she exclaimed, "Mercy, if I knew as much as some of you do about the theory of writing & selling, I wouldn't be able to write a line. I would be too self-conscious."

One of the fundamental mistakes that many writers make is to believe that old canard, "that those who know how, do, and those who don't, teach." That is one of those clever, half-true truths. It is a shame that an author like George Bernard Shaw should have repeated it, and thereby given it some degree of authority. In over 30 years of practical writing for a living, I have seen many professional authors of high quality, who cannot tell how they write. I have also seen a goodly number of great teachers, who aren't able to write and understand the "creative" process sympathetically and, to express this idea more vividly, creatively. Their imagination finds full expression only in a creative analysis and projection of the principles of handling ideas and plots and people in an imaginative world.

There are good teachers and poor ones and there are good writers and poor ones. Each has his place. For the writer the important thing is ideas, creation. Technique is only a means to an end. As Allene says, if writers become too engrossed in it or too self-conscious about it, it will trip them up. It will show their underlying sterility. For a teacher who loves his or her dedicated task, there is always the importunate question of how and why a writer performs that unending miracle of transmitting thought creatively, or of making an illusion of reality come alive on the impersonal printed page. Without teachers with a gift for perspective and an appreciation for the mystery and the adventure of life, there could be no progress.

It is a fact, though, that the great proportion of people are either creative or critical, but not both. Some lean toward the imaginative, others in the direction of the analytical. That is why many good feature writers cannot swing over into fiction. Their point of view is too factual. And so it's a practical thing for any would-be writer before he becomes too involved and committed, to take a self-appraisal and see where that flare he may possess lies. This will surely save him a great amount of heart-ache.

But it's also true that in any cross-section there will be those who vary from the normal or obvious pattern. There will be borderline cases. And I believe that the literary coach must inevitably be one of these. The rare person who combines something of the imaginative and a portion of the analytical, may be a very fortunate person in the writing profession. He may not be so inventive, or creative a person as the purely imaginative one, or so keenly intelligent as those who are more factually minded. But possessing something of both types, he can use the talents he comes up with. Such a person's abilities undoubtedly show best on the secondary will undoubtedly show best on the secondarily creative level of revision. It will be hard for him to get hold of an idea. But then he should prove good at "yenging it up" through technical improvement. So, study yourself!

## REWRITE

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## WHAT IS WRONG?

Fiction today is a sick dog. The two extremes of the dilemma are sharply highlighted by the boxes on this page. Cost & Quality. It is getting more and more impossible to finance, and hence publish, a novel. And writers of this generation simply are not measuring up to the standards, as laid down by past masters of the craft.

Young writers have always seen life in a "grim" manner. But in the past that has not prevented oncoming generations from producing notable or distinguished literature. In time great writers have ripened and produced out of a gathered wisdom novels that all nations in our contemporary civilization have treasured and clung to. With

experiment, for the first edition is bound in paper covers and sells for \$1.25. When this edition is exhausted, if further copies should be required, they will be printed and bound in the conventional way and retail at \$3.50. The following explanation is printed on the back cover of this first edition.

"A new or relatively unknown writer needs, above all, readers. With present-day costs and the retail prices that result, he and his publisher are finding these readers with greater and greater difficulty. The typesetting and paper cost the publisher as much for such a novel as for a new novel by the most popular writer in the world. The cost of printing and binding the latter—because of the large edition the publisher can risk manufacturing—is rather less! The spread in royalty between the two is not very great, the little-known author usually receiving two-thirds the sum per copy sold which is paid his very successful competitor.

"Thus it is that the reader of novels pays the same for a book that he is almost certain he will enjoy reading—by an author who is already a trademark, so to speak—as he does when he takes a chance on a brand-new writer."

## MELANCHOLY FARE

Charm magazine has reluctantly announced its decision to "retire fiction from our pages" temporarily at least. "The decision," the editors state in the August issue, "was one we didn't want to make, but the current output of writers forced us into it. We just couldn't find enough stories that we felt our readers would enjoy. . . . The better writers today seem to be dedicated to the production of 'mood' fiction. These stories, however literary, are almost all depressingly grim and gloomy. We didn't want to offer our readers a steady diet of this melancholy fare, and there wasn't enough cheerful (or merely non-depressing) fiction to balance it."

a few exceptions, the last quarter century, it may be said fairly authoritatively, has given us many exceedingly competent writers but few outstanding authors likely to stand beside the acknowledged masters. The reason is not clear.

One can advance all of the usual coherent rationalizations concerning times of change and insecurity and all the rest. Yet earlier periods of stress and peace have both in their moments of history contributed memorable men and women of ideas and stature. An atmosphere of negativism and superficiality seems to nullify the work of those who have written today. No one of them seems endowed with great thoughts and the large perspective that purges or purifies the mind, fills one's heart with warmth and hope, and gives strength and wider vision to the souls of an upcoming race of men.

One feels as he reads today's fiction the skill in observation of the authors, a technical excellence often amounting to inviting and exciting craftsmanship. But there is too much realism and not enough imagination. And a searing quality of callous disillusion. A talented mind tries to record life with all the ruthless, relentless candor and detachment of our modern high speed, sensitive, impersonal cameras. But how rarely does it get beneath the surface. Like an X-ray, it often goes through, but only reveals as a blur the human heart and mind. There is very little of wisdom, and even less of compassion. It is hard and competent, & uncaring, despite its tears. We must care!

Too many writers today seem to be following a convention or a fixed pattern, as did the salacious, seldom witty Restoration dramatists, who came after Shakespeare. It is imperative they shock a reader and ape an appearance of sophistication that does not, nine times out of ten, ring true. Like little boys trying to be grown up, they try to be "dramatic" and end by being maudlinly melodramatic.

There is need to return to the old moral standards. To like the characters one writes about and care strongly, even passionately about their fates and deviations. Too much writing today is "off the top" and like many religions—purely perfunctory. As the ballad man said: "It's what inside that counts."

## REWRITE

### HOW MUCH DO YOU LIVE AT YOUR PEAK?

Here is a bit of philosophy, a theme-song almost, that has a peculiar edge of meaning for writers. In "Home Prayers" Rev. Allen W. Clark tells a touching story about a little girl who wrote to her minister, then a chaplain in the armed forces: "May you live all of your life."

That is the ambition of all writers & the thing that at their best they do for readers. They think about, discover and pass on ways to live at the top of one's soul as much as possible all of the time. In moments of discouragement it is perhaps comforting to remember that no one can possibly do it every waking moment. But the smart person learns, the hard way, how to adapt himself, so that he wastes as little time as possible.

What do you do when you lack the vitality to write? Do you turn on the tv? Read comics? Kill time? Or do you clear your desk & do research, organize your thoughts and emotions, i. e., get ready to write, to write? I have often been impressed by the fact, that so many of us do not live all, or even one-tenth of our few waking hours. We fritter away, or use very fruitlessly so much of our time on this planet. It's frightening if you stop to think about it.

I read somewhere recently that a wise man once said that each of us lives in a circle beyond which in spite of everything we cannot go. The frightening, terrifying thought is that in part we all are born and grow up under limitations of muscle and mind & spirit, but that most of the wall around us that holds us prisoner, is the product of our own choosing. We rise over our own dead tastes, the likes and dislikes that we put aside in favor of better ones. But some of us do not expand, reach out for new horizons. We are content with the past, and so we wall in and prevent our own growth. We do not realize a dream of which we are potentially capable.

But there is hope and an extraordinary inspiration in the thought that if we know about this condition, we can do something about it. We can exercise our wills, continually push ourselves to be active in a variety of ways, and check frequently to learn if our activity is on the highest level that we are capable of. The greatest gift of God is that we can always do better and improve ourselves. We do not have to be content with the past.

And so the wish that we at WCS House have for you is that you may "live all of life", every moment of it. Whatever the editors in their infinite wisdom, or lack of it, may do to you, keep working at increasing your own ability to live at the peak of your powers. Push that circling wall. Extend your sphere of influence. Remember that you are a writer capable of communicating and making your readers see and hear, and think and feel. You are in touch with the infinite. Trust it!

### THE QUALITY EVERYONE WANTS TO BUY!

The thing that editors want to see most in a ms., whether it be short or long, poetry, prose or fiction, is a sense of urgency and excitement. Somehow the ms. conveys a feeling to the reader that it is timely or very urgent. Something that the editor should be quick about getting into print, because it's provocative and exciting, something that is bound to make readers think and discuss. A true "show stopper", as they say in the theater.

Eleanor Kask, an excellent publicity promoter, recently made this point in shouting about the new Civil War novel (by MacKinlay Kantor) to be published late in October. She described how that sense of excitement somehow is kindled first in the editorial office while it is being read; spreads to the salesmen who welcome a chance to carry an enthusiasm to the booksellers that does not have to be simulated. Then it jumps to the publicity department which can tell the truth & knows that this will consequently be an exciting, satisfying campaign.

It is difficult to define this quality in a ms. But many people can smell it when it's present. An old schoolmate of mine spent an evening and the following day with us. During a discussion of what constitutes good or bad writing, he said he had never considered himself a writer or been trained in such techniques. But he felt that when he read a good book he could tell almost immediately, that "this man can write." Just as when the reverse is true, he can sense that the writer has no feeling for effective use of word relationships.

Actually, it is a combination of a number of complex factors. The author has something to say. By that we mean he can convert a dull subject into one we want to hear discussed. He writes with authority, because he writes from within. He has thought about his story and feels about it intensely; so much so, even when he may perhaps treat it lightly, he can make the reader feel the excitement and emotion he has experienced. His words visualize, form vivid images and achieve freshness of presentation. You feel he is treating you to a unique, personal presentation. The narrative drive moves steadily along on a well organized line of interest. You are not conscious of the techniques and mechanics because he sweeps you off your feet. You are only aware of the fact that he is competent and confident. He knows what he is doing; and he probably is enjoying himself. I know that the best professionals, even though a given story may come easy, work very hard to create the illusion of this casual, carelessly facile style. I have heard some talk for hours on how they and other writers capture a sense of intimate and personal charm in telling a story.

I think the real secret is simple, natural artifice based on knowledge. Skillful illusion.



## REWRITE

### FUNDAMENTALS OF GOOD POETRY

By Elva Ray Harris

### THE POET'S WORKSHOP

The poem for discussion this month:

#### APPLE JEWELS

By Mary A. Fallon

Sapphires, rubies, emeralds and amethysts  
Leap from the burning logs in flaming whips,  
As amber tongues curl and lick the blazing  
applewood.  
But these are not flames that flicker and  
die:  
The sapphires are bluebirds there in the sky,  
The rubies are red robins flying around;  
The emeralds are leaves, and the grass on  
the ground;  
The amethysts come from the sun's last rays.  
These jewels were all part of the appletree's  
days.  
Now they glow in the beauty of burning fire,  
More precious than those we seek in the  
flame of desire,  
As amber tongues curl and lick the blazing  
applewood.

I would like to begin the discussion this month with a letter from Mary A. Fallon, in which she tells how her mind worked when she wrote this poem. She asks some questions in the course of it that Workshop commentators have foreseen and answered. "I wrote the poem almost exactly as it came to me. Then I studied it. I felt that the idea and development of the thought, and the mood, seemed more satisfactory than the form, or at times, the word choice or meter.

"Can the words 'amethysts' and 'whips' be properly called rhymed? Do they give trouble in reading the poem aloud? Line six gave me trouble in word choice and meter. At first I had 'robin red-breasts' and changed it to 'red robins', but that gives four 'r's'. I am not satisfied. Perhaps I should take out the word 'red'. Can 'flicker and die' & 'flame of desire' be called trite?

"When I write, the rhythm seems determined by the way the words fall, rather than by any conscious attempt to follow any special meter. I read to see if it is smooth and if the meter needs changing. In 'Apple Jewels', for example, this is especially so, and it contains changes in rhythm. Is this acceptable? The rhyme scheme has a pattern, but not a conventional one. Is this permissible?"

Before we answer Mrs. Fallon's questions, let us jot down first some of the good comments people made about the poem.

Eunice C. Neely: "'Apple Jewels' it seems to me, sparkles with color and light. The allusions are good."

Olive Holstein Spencer: "'Apple Jewels' has painted for me not only the old fireplace—where they are glowing, but the thrift of New England that uses everything, salvages even the storm's ruin."

Olive Boynton: "The poem is refreshingly ingenuous. It is like a child's soliloquy—as she watches her beloved appletree go up in a mass of flaming jewels. The picture is sharp and bright; the meaning clear. She has recaptured the glory of the living appletree. That in each jewel the appletree holds, and reflects some memory of beauty is a charming and unusual metaphor."

Grace Holliday Scott: "The verbs in the first four lines are good, active and accurate. The poem is a riot for the imagination. It goes a step or so beyond reality so that it is all symbolic—a rich flight into 'it might be'."

Marjorie B. Neagle: "A beautiful thought; one that all of us watching burning apple wood, have experienced."

Emily May Young: "Shows depth of feeling."

Bessie H. Hartling: "The pictures are exquisite. The metaphors are apt."

Lena Swan: "Her scintillating imagery sparks and enriches my thought."

Now to get down to the business of improving this poem.

Eunice C. Neely: "As for construction, I am unable to find the pattern. Lines 4 toll do have rhythm and rhyme, the rhythm just a little irregular. For line 12 I would suggest:

As amber tongues flicker and curl in the  
blaze."

Julia Anna Cook: "Line 3 reads like prose.. She should decide on a definite rhythm, and rhyme pattern, and stick to it." Julia suggests for lines 3 and 4:

As amber flames consume the applewood.  
But these are not uncertain flames that die."

Mary Alden Campbell: "Since the meter is not well done, it might be better to put the entire picture into free verse with an economy of words." Grace Holliday Scott agrees.

Marjorie B. Neagle: "The poem seems labor-ed and contrived. The meter is not too good."

There were comments about wordiness.

Grace Holliday Scott: "'And the grass on the ground' is not only unnecessary, but is too evidently added for rhyme."

Julia Anna Cook: "In line 9 'all' is superfluous, also 'burning' and 'red', since one always thinks of robins as being red & fire



## REWRITE

as burning."

Elmer Dahl: Words like 'there in the sky' & 'flying around' and 'on the ground' seem to be used merely to fit the rhyme scheme rather than to add to the significance of the poem."

Bessie H. Hartling: "I would suggest omitting 'are' after rubies and substituting for 'flying', 'soaring' or 'fluttering'. If 'are' is omitted after emeralds, 'green leaves,' I think, would be more expressive. 'Now' could be omitted, and the iambic rhythm retained in line 10. 'Cleaving' or 'skimming' the sky, I think, gives a clearer picture than 'there in'."

There were opposing comments concerning a description of the robins.

Mary Alden Campbell: "Robin-red is not ruby-red."

Olive Boynton: "'Rubies are red robins' is a happy alliteration, but I am afraid the ornithologists in our midst (I am one of that backyard variety myself) cannot accept it, because, of course, robins are not red. Even the famed red breast is not ruby but rust, & except for the male robin in early spring, a very dull rust."

Eunice C. Neely: "The birds are well chosen. Robins and bluebirds are so often associated with orchards. Although robins aren't red, the word robin immediately suggests the red breast."

Clarence C. Adams: "Cardinal would be a better bird to represent a ruby than a red robin."

Line 11 is criticized:

Jacqueline Tweton: "It seems slightly out of keeping with the rest of the poem. I get the feeling 'desire' was used as an easy word to rhyme with 'fire'."

Grace Holliday Scott: "Line 11 should be omitted. 'More precious' and 'flame of desire' are a bit trite."

Madeline G. Salmon: "Line 11 with its 'flame of desire' simply throws me off."

Regarding "whisps":

Julia Anna Cook: "In line 2 I assume the word should be 'wisps'."

Clarence C. Adams: "Amethysts and whisps do not rhyme."

Bessie H. Hartling: "Whisps relates to smoke. 'Shower' is a better word to use with sparks"

Olive Boynton: "Whisp sounds fresh minted.. The word is not in my dictionary. Whether a

self-coined word, or a local spelling of the commoner 'wisp', I trust it is acceptable. I like the delightful onomatopoeia. (I have observed in some sections the 'H' isn't sounded in the 'WH' words.) You not only see the shape and motion of the flames in the word, but give the 'H' its true value and you also hear the sound of the flames."

Concerning lines 3 and 12:

Olive Holstein Spencer: "As the curlingtongues are the fire that is burning the applewood, I do not like the word 'lick' in that line."

Bessie H. Hartling: "I like the refrain 'Amber tongues curl and lick the blazing applewood'."

Olive Boynton: "In lines 3 and 12 there appears to be a repetition of the flame idea. 'The blazing applewood' is such a beautiful and effective phrase for ending the poem, I would change 'tongues curl and lick'. I'd like to see 'amber' retained in some way. It is a color very conspicuous in burning applewood. Moreover, it carries along that jewel thought."

Suggestions for theme:

Olive Holstein Spencer: "Why not suggest that the tree in life gave food, now is offering beauty, and eliminate some of those thirteen syllables in line 11."

Olive Boynton: "It seems wonderful that the old appletree, though demolished by hurricane, kept right on giving of its beauty and fragrance as it went up in flames, offering jewels even as it said farewell. It would be most appealing, I think, if this item in the appletree's history could be brought out. Or would it be better to point up the hurricane's part with another poem?"

What about the title?

Bessie H. Hartling: "'Apple Jewels' isn't poetic as a title. How about 'Jewel Display'?"

Olive Boynton: "The title does not do the poem justice. Would not 'Jewels' alone be better?"

Grace Holliday Scott: "The title is a honey. In two short words it appeals to all of the senses, uses contrast, piquancy & wealth."

Markets suggested were The COUNTRY POET, C. S. MONITOR, the farm journals and nature magazines.

Though it may be confusing to an inexperienced poet, it is always interesting when we get a variance of opinions. And it proves that there is nothing out and dried regarding verse writing. It's not an exact science like mathematics. And therein lies the chal-

## REWRITE

lence to our creative ability. These differences also prove that we have a wide readership with different tastes, and there's comfort in that. If you can't appeal to all of the readers, you can to some. We have a wide geographical representation in the Workshop this time. Commentators live all the way between Maine and California, and as far south as Washington, D. C. Some who helped in the discussion are beginners themselves, & some are established poets, while others are the teachers of classes in verse.

Now, for the last word. It does not seem to be fair that I should always have the final word, but perhaps that is my reward for organizing the comments, and trying to get in as many as possible in the space.

Eunice Neely has a good point when she says the birds are well chosen for their plausibility. Perhaps another jewel could represent the color of the robin more accurately.

Mrs. Fallon's method of writing seems to be a good one. She lets herself go while the intense feeling of creation is upon her. But then there should be what Mrs. Cook calls a cooling off period, a putting of the poem in cold storage, after which it is taken out & looked at objectively with the evaluating & impersonal eye and mind of the critic. It is then that one's grounding in the principles of technique, one's taste, ever changing for the better, and one's ear should come in, to reach a positive action to decide if what has been created is good.

The more we learn about the writing of poetry, and the more we practice our craft the easier it will be to incorporate simultaneously with creation the principles which enable us to express our ideas effectively.

To answer Mrs. Fallon's question: changes in rhythm are acceptable if the change adds to the beauty and effectiveness of the poem. Workshop members suggested that in this case the poem would have been better if written in a more consistent metrical pattern, or if written in free verse.

An unconventional rhyme scheme is also permissible if it does the job better. We are no longer limited to the use of true rhymes in set patterns. Daily new patterns & variations are being invented successfully. The possibilities are as wide as the imagination of countless poets.

Wordiness can be eliminated from a poem by first recognizing it, and then working at it. Merely a matter of persistence. There is no place for the extra word where each and every one counts, and many count two or three times.

Closely related to wordiness is the superfluous idea, such as "flames of desire". A good many members of the Workshop, myself in-

cluded, felt this idea did not belong in the poem.

The two suggestions for theme were good, I think, though the poem is complete now as to theme. If the author does not want to incorporate them, there is material for still another poem.

Although it may be entirely a personal opinion, I side with Grace Holliday Scott in liking the title.

The essence of the poem is there, the spark. Mrs. Fallon has only to learn her craft. She already knows, though a beginner, what a poem is.

Next time we discuss an unrhymed poem:

### IDENTITY

By Madeline G. Salmon

Whoever lies alone to hear the leaves  
Already knows whatever I may say  
For I have learned it all from leaves. The selfsame  
Wind that gives them voice gives voice to me,  
The selfsame rainfall feeds their thirst, the sun,  
The silicon, the seed, the selfsame all.

Empty our ears of noun and adjective:  
Nothing swaddled in words can have the strength  
To tell us who we are. Let oak leaves roar,  
Let maples splash in us, rain fill our skulls  
And claim us kin as fire claims the dark.

Madeline G. Salmon wrote poems while still in college. Then marriage and two daughters intervened. Now that the girls are teen-age she is writing again. Has had acceptances at The LANTERN and WESTMINSTER and several of her poems have been read on the radio. She is anxious to see that each poem is as good as she can make it before sending it out.

Send in your comments on this poem and include a poem of your own. Deadline: Nov. 1, 1955. Try to make it earlier. But remember if you are late, your comment will be given to the author anyway. Each poem used in REWRITE receives a token payment of \$1 in addition to the help from Workshop members.

To be eligible, each poem must be accompanied by a comment on the other fellow's poem—the current one up for discussion. Do not forget to send a self-addressed stamped envelop, if you want your poem returned, in case we can't use it. Occasionally I make the time to scribble a brief comment on the poems we do not have space for when I see the opportunity to give a friendly boost.

Bessie H. Hartling sent in her thanks for the many comments on her poem. They do help.

## REWRITE

### SOME BOOKS FOR POETS

**TRUE PLACES.** Burnham Eaton. The Golden Quill \$2.50. A first book by one who is not a beginner by any means. You will enjoy a depth of thought expressed so simply it never becomes commonplace. Her sonnets to her father and mother are especially appealing. Apparently written on a purely intellectual & impersonal basis, they are unexpectedly leaved with phrases betraying the warm, friendly side of the poet. A book to be read, and read again. About places not on any map, but but visited by all of us.

**FROM LYRIC FIRE.** Kelsie Ramey Osborne. Durham Chapbook #10. The American Weave Press. \$1. Tenth in the fine series of awards given annually to promising poets at the summer conference at the University of N. H. It is sponsored jointly by AMERICAN WEAVE & REWRITE Magazines. Kelsie Ramey Osborne was a happy choice, truly singing with lyric fire about experiences common to us all, as well as some peculiar to her Northwest. There is no wordiness here. Her seeming preference—for compound words—packs her short poems in a sound manner with observations many a poet would require more space to tell.

**HANDS TO THE NEEDY.** Sister Mary Pauline Fitts. Doubleday & Co. \$3.00. Published in 1950, it is nearly out of print. We met the author at the Phila. Regional Writers' Conference. A charming person, she writes movingly regarding the foundress of the Grey Nuns (G.N.S.H. Congregation) of which she is one. The story is one of hardship and dedication to the poor. Students of history will enjoy the detailed account of the foundation and development of French Canada in the 1700's. Others will be interested in the sympathetic & kindly portrayal of an angel of mercy.

**COLLECTED POEMS.** 1955. Robert Graves. Doubleday & Co. \$4.50. A selection rather than the total collection implied by the title. The poet has edited out many poems he thinks he does not wish preserved for posterity.

**POETRY IS FUN.** Ruth Crary. Wings Press. \$5. Planned primarily as a supplementary reader in high school and college English courses. It is comprehensive within the limits of conventional verse. A thick book mainly because it gives several examples from published poets for each point it makes. Over-priced.

**LOVE POEMS.** Gloria Vanderbilt. World Publishing Co. \$2.50. A first volume by a young woman trying to find her place in the field of art. The dedication reads "for S and the search" and one feels Miss Vanderbilt to be searching through these pages. Though these poems do not show the maturity that some in later years may, there is a genuineness that shines through. One thinks of the author not as the much-publicized heiress, but as a real person trying to live above the circumstances that life has thrust upon her.

**AS A VAPOR RISING.** Mary Alden Campbell. Big Mountain Press. No price given. Here are poems to read in the evening. They are refreshing, well-done and easy to understand. Yet they leave one food for the mind and spirit to digest.

**THE SONG OF THE STONE WALL.** Helen Keller. A reprint of a long poem originally published in 1910. A welcome project from the Braille League of Friendship in June of this year.

**RAINBOW AT MIDNIGHT.** Lawrence Lipton. The Golden Quill Press. \$2. A selection of "The Book Club for Poetry". A scholar and craftsman, author of two novels, writes allegorically about the present world crisis. Not very cheerful, but plenty to think about.

**HOW LIFE GETS THE STORY.** Stanley Hayfield. Doubleday & Co. \$5. An adv. man puts LIFE Magazine in a hard cover and explains the "now-it-can-be-told" human interest behind a few spectacular picture stories. Morris Gest, the theatrical impresario, first devised a technique for making his audience pay the advertising costs to hook itself. If Ethel Merman reads this book, she will revive her cheery battle-cry, "O-oh, Sucker!" Some gorgeous colored photography, and it won't fit on any bookshelf you've got, Mister or Missus!

### NEWS FROM HERE AND THERE

The Catholic Poetry Society of America is publishing on Sept. 15th "Sealed Unto the Day". This is its 4th anthology representing five years of poems published in SPIRIT. The work of members, though not all the authors hold membership in the Society now. Only one edition of 1,000 copies at \$3 per copy is being printed. Copies must be bought from the Society, 386 4th Ave., NYC 16.

The cost of book production is still rising. Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. announces that as of June 1st prices for presswork and binding were increased between 4% and 5% by the firm that produces a substantial portion of Borzoi Books, Knopf's fine quality books. (See P. 15 for the outcome of an experiment that tries to keep the cost of first novels down.)

Cornell University Press began on Sept. 8th a new series of paperbound books for the mature and literate reader in the humanities, social sciences and sciences. A good idea, if paperbacks can prove permanent enough.

Paul Nathan, PUBLISHERS' WEEKLY columnist, devoted his column on "Rights & Permissions" recently to the possible implications of an historic backstage struggle involving TV. A difference in the number of live and/or taped dramatic shows depends on whether they're made in NYC or Hollywood. Fewer programs to derive from books, if the West triumphs. On the other hand viewer response might have a part in the struggle. Hollywood shows, it's said, "lack the spontaneity of lives ones."



## REWRITE

### THE PROBLEM OF GOOD PLOTTING

Plotting is one of the greatest stumbling blocks for most writers. And this includes a good many professionals. But actually, the trouble is much more complex than mere plot which is a bald statement of what happens in a story. For rank amateurs the trouble sometimes is inability to recognize what constitutes a situation. Or it may be that they're manipulating the characters through a situation. Therefore, the characters seem wooden types going through the motions.

It is no over-statement to say that writers often are scared by the very thought of plotting. Their fears set-up a psychological block. They honestly make an effort to allow their characters to "act natural". But when it comes to the decisive action, they panic and either step in and arbitrarily pick the outcome, or blindly feel for the right end. Either method fails because the reader cannot fail to notice the lack of a chain-like line of interest and the sense of the inevitability that logical cause-and-effect are certain to produce.

Ezther Forbes once made the point that the most difficult thing in mapping out a story is to keep it fluid until you have the idea completely worked out in your mind. The moment you begin to think definitely that the solution will be thus and so, or arrived at in such a manner, it has begun to harden. It will be difficult for you to see it in different lights and shades. You will start to force the characters to go through the fixed gate. Or you will jiggle their character traits so it will be logical for them to be true to a predetermined outcome. And then a writer is lost.

The moral values can be very helpful. It has been said that every story is basically a moral situation. And if you think of it, I think you will see that this is true. Certainly the Western where the bad man is outwitted and the love story in which "he gets her", are moral tales, often of a sentimental nature. And by implication the "quality" story which makes a comment on life, rather than merely reflecting or imitating it, has moral values at the base. The difficulty of course comes when either the author does not know what the sum of the moral values are, & sometimes today does not care; or, when in a realistic manner he tries to sort them out, he becomes so deeply and subtly involved he drags the reader into a hopeless morass.

In this regard I have found it very helpful to think of all kinds of things in stories as exemplifying a cross-section, or in a manner of speaking a scale. Just as a clock pendulum sweeps from right to left and back again, so in a story there can be change or lack of change. And the values are black and white, but also they can be all the prismatic shades and degrees of change in between. In given space there will then be two extremes,

plus variously graduated differences in between. And because the parts form a pattern the reader can make use of the principles of contrast, comparison and progression. Thus an abstraction or a formula of ideas can be visualized in terms the eye can see.

In terms of plot this enhances your "line of interest" because you can help the reader to visualize the movement from one position to another. If the girl, for instance, at the beginning of the story tells the man she does not love him and in the end accepts him, the story can show the steps by which she is carried to effect this complete reversal. Or if one man she loves is Good and another is Bad, some of the subordinate characters may be used to symbolize the intervening shades of moral value, and the complicating interweaving of the issues.

It is true that in a story conflict, it is strategically advisable to show the reader, that the issue is joined between two forces and that the MC is faced by two, and only two, alternatives. But this device gives the author some leeway, and enables him to obtain at least a presentiment of some of the complexity of real life while retaining the simplification of fiction that sharpens and intensifies the drama.

But where the professional author goes ahead of the less experienced writer lies in his ability (1) to make full dramatic use of such a "pattern"; and (2) he gets inside of his characters. I am reading now "Sincerely, Willis Wayde" by John P. Marquand. It is a joy to watch the craftsmanship of this competent writer used again and again to dramatize what a character thinks or feels solely by what he says or does in a scene. Plot is the least of Mr. Marquand's interests. He tells a story, and very well in his leisurely way. But what he is interested in is the moral standards of his characters. He has them constantly reveal themselves, often betray their own inner shallow weaknesses and innate strength merely by the well selected flash of dialogue or interplay of personalities in a scene. Always he knows why he has written a scene. Always he plays a game, allowing the reader to spell out the insinuations and implications (the overtones) of a scene or even a single phrase. The mercenariness or the charm of a character stands completely revealed by what Mr. Marquand allows the reader to see, or hear, or think, or feel. Action is seldom described for itself but rather for what it means. Sophisticated drama, yes, but so simple, so transparent and clear that no reader scarcely can miss that underlying intent.

William C. Lengel, editor-in-chief of the Fawcett Publications, once said, "Remember, stories never change. It is only the way of telling stories that change." While the art of telling stories may seem temporarily to be deteriorating, actually it is not, it is improving, getting harder all the time. Plot

## REWRITE

except in the slimy crime pulps, is turning more and more inside the mind and heart. It is what characters think and feel, more than what they do and say, that really matters. A world faced with atomic problems, security, and the implications of every thought, word, and deed, reads today to learn from, as well as to enjoy the suspense of mind drama. The readers are keyed to it, find relief in it. So Mr. Marquand is only symptomatic of wider, more universal application of this basic principle of plotting.

Whether the conflict is between man & man, man and nature, or two inner aspects of one man, man himself, the truism is the same. If you will think in terms of the emotional relations that exist in life, you will find a plot comes easier. But these relationships, it must be stressed, are always two-way affairs. Building stories around a single MC, we become engrossed with one character. We forget that there are other characters at the other end of the rope. That a story is never concerned with one man alone, but rather with his relationships when he becomes seriously involved with other men, or forces. A good definition of a short story might well be: "An emotional experience when a man becomes involved in a situation with other human beings, or forces in nature, or opposing traits within himself."

Therefore, if you will in future think of all of your characters in a story, and then tie the names together with a line from every name to every other name, you will have a criss-cross geometric pattern that can be of great help to you in your plotting. Because while you will not wish to fill in all of the lines between minor characters, merely seeing these different lines right there in front of you, will set you thinking. And if you select certain lines as the important & vital ones, you will fill these in and discard the others.

Just doing this is a first step in plotting. You will be forced to make decisions & if you think why you are making them, relationships with regard to the dramatic situation will begin to form and clarify in your mind. More important, perhaps you will find yourself in a blind alley. You will see the original idea was not structurally sound or you need further lines more than those that you originally picked out. This means that a lot more thinking about your characters has gone on in your mind. And best of all, your imagination is not playing with them as individuals separate from each other. You are not cataloguing them; you are rubbing them, so to speak, against each other.

Now if you let your mind think of each of these lines as more than just a two-way relationship; if you start by wondering how a girl in such a relationship feels toward the boy, or her father or the other girl, and if you begin filling in the background of time and place and circumstances, you will have a

very exciting experience. These characters, strangely, will begin to come alive. One of the fundamental factors in good plotting is knowing enough about your characters. Most writers do not know enough about their people and they begin to write too soon. Then when they get stalled, they try to break up the jam by artificial or theatrical climaxes devised by the author acting as God outside the story.

The simple device of having a visual plan of all the two-way emotional relationships, and always keeping it in front of you, sends you back to your characters inside the story. If you build up this automatic reaction to plot jams, you will almost always manage to work yourself free. The point being that you can never know enough about your characters. And while much of the intimate detail you may learn about them from thinking over the two-way lines, may never actually appear in the stories, the fact that you know all of these innumerable facts, inevitably lends a color and depth to any story.

Finally, one of the objectives in writing a story is to create an illusion of reality. You will find that if you follow this method of plotting and develop a curiosity & emotional interest in your characters, plotting will lose its terrors for you. This is because you will be using your heart as well as your mind in your analysis of your problem. It will no longer be entirely a mental exercise. All good story-telling is a blend of the mind and the emotions. When you use both, even when you are trying to "frame up a plot," you are using the creative instead of the critical or analytical process.

Try it some day. You will find that using your own emotions and feeling your way into a story as well as cold bloodedly lining it up, makes plotting a lot more fun. And you can with practice do this when you think in terms of the two-way emotional relationships between your characters. Go to it and a lot of good luck.

## OUR WRITER FRIENDS HELP EACH OTHER

The WCS Scholarship Fund. This reflects money given to us by friendly writers, and a number of others. It enables us to help the handicapped and shut in writers. It has been doing much good work recently. For the year so far it has received (as of Aug. 1st) the sum of \$25, and has expended \$21. It operates frequently at a deficit, if the needs are urgent.

Though not considered an obligation, some of the recipients repay portions of the aid they receive. This enables the Fund to help other writers. Thus, any given sum may over the years benefit two, three or more writers in succession. We like to see people helping each other that way. It enriches the minds, the hearts and lives of those who give, and those who receive.

## HOW'S YOUR BATTING AVERAGE?

Here are the acceptances since June:

Kathryn Wilson  
Article: YOUR ROMANCE.  
Quiz: YOUTH'S COMRADE.

Lillian Everts  
Poems: NEW VOICES, EDUCATIONAL FORUM,  
OLIVANT QUARTERLY, etc.  
Articles: See: WCS FAMILY NEWS. P. 12.

Rebecca Phillips  
Article, GOOD BUSINESS (July).

Frances Durland  
Story: THIS DAY.

Margie B. Boswell  
Poems: KALEIDOGRAPH, SONNET SEQUENCES,  
AM. BARD, THE STEP LADDER, PALMETTO  
VOICES, POETRY CARAVAN, etc.

Emily May Young  
Poems: CLEAR HORIZONS, CONQUEST, FRONT  
RANK, WESTMINSTER, WEEKLY UNITY and  
CAPPER'S WEEKLY.

Helen McCarthy  
Article: CATHOLIC DIGEST.

Grace Holliday Scott  
Articles: CONTEST, AMERICAN (Open Door  
Dep't.) (August).

Peggie Schulz  
Articles: CAPPER'S FARMER, HORTICUL-  
TURE, AMERICAN HOME, POPULAR GARDEN-  
ING.  
Book: Oct. Selection, AMERICAN GARDEN  
GUILD. "Growing Plants Under Lights"

Winalee Gentry  
Book: "One More River to Cross," WEST-  
MINSTER PRESS (October).

Lydia Lion Roberts  
Articles: Boston GLOBE, DAILY MEDITA-  
TIONS.

Stanley M. Kenney  
Article: RURAL NEW YORKER.

B. Coursin Black  
Article: SUNSHINE.

Edward W. Ludwig  
Sci. Fic. Anthology: "Mr. Sci. Fic. Se-  
lects" (England).  
Story: THIS DAY.

Floyd N. Hilliker  
Serial: HORIZONS. (8-part.)  
Stories: STANDARD, HORIZONS, COUNCIL  
FIRES, YOUTH.

Julie Anna Cook  
Articles: Boston GLOBE. (3 short).

Mabel Irene Huggins  
Quiz: TEENS.

Send in your report. More... (See: P. 12.)

## REWRITE

## THINK OF THIS IN TERMS OF WRITING

In the June-July issue of the Christopher News Notes there was a list of tips for teenagers. It might well apply to writers. You could do much worse than think it through in terms of your own need. It just shows fundamentals are pretty much the same wherever you find them. Here they are: (paraphrased)

(1) Set a big, worthwhile goal for yourself. Think big, not small; in terms of the world and not of two blocks. The writer who wants to reach a big audience, has to do that. The timeless and the universal instead of small backwater currents. Significance instead of cluttered detail.

(2) Keep close to God. Develop your inner & subconscious power. To be outwardly effective, you must have a great spirit within.

(3) Spend time with your mother and father. Build roots for yourself somewhere. Develop the inspiring family relationship. Know people, so you won't become a stranger in your own home.

(4) Study hard. Start thinking early. Contribute to each class you attend. Learn to be outgoing. Blend talent and high ideals.

(5) Be selective. In the friends you choose and the magazines, newspapers, books, etc., you spend time on. The more you select what is good and wholesome, the less time you'll have for the second-rate.

(6) Demand the best. Be constructive, active and for something, not merely against. Demand the best always of yourself in whatever you do.

(7) Show an interest in teenager problems.. In other problems, too. Don't sit on a sideline griping. Take an understanding interest. It will benefit others and fill you with the joy of creation.

(8) Be yourself. You have certain talents & qualities. Develop your own personality. Do not lose your own individuality. Fill to the best of your ability your niche, and you'll not have lived in vain.

(9) Improve your ability to communicate your ideas. Many people fail to develop the power within them because they neglect to learn how to transmit their own ideas to others.

(10) Take responsibility. Don't dodge it. A writer of all people must face the implications of what he writes. He cannot take back the words he utters. They are there for all time. The good writer is aware of this task he has assumed, and does not fear it.

(11) Prepare for your own home. Roots give you balance in many directions. Don't underestimate your God-given power for good. You can plan, dedicate yourself, and so become co-worker with God, bring new life into being.



## REWRITE

### THE FICTION WORKSHOP

Only four writers participated in the Fiction Workshop. But I think all of us learned something. I wish that we had space to do the kind of job for prose that Elva is doing for poetry. And that I am able to do at the class I taught last winter at Clark University Evening College. But I believe the plan whereby I read and discuss a ms. individually now, for a single writer, and then carry over for the REWRITE audience as much of the discussion as I can, is basically good. It is time-consuming, but it is helping you folk, and that is what matters.

Grace Holliday Scott sent in a short short story with a surprise ending. It concerned a child, her unsympathetic mother, the never-seen father whom the mother thought she had under her thumb, and the inevitable "other" women. It is a poignant and, I think, probably salable situation.

The points I made are universally applicable. First, in reaching for a dramatic surprise, Grace committed two errors: (1) surprise became so important she withheld data from the reader and did not allow the latter to participate enough. (2) In a story in which overtones and subtle implications are vital, she did not get deeply enough into the two-way emotional relations between the important characters.

The story depends on what the child tells her mother about a meeting with her father & the other woman. The reader should be able, naturally, to read into this scene more than either the child or the mother does. It is one of those delightful stories where readers can see more than the characters and in the manner of God looking down, foresee not the solution, but how the heavens are likely to fall upon the MC. It never does a bit of harm for the reader to participate fully in this story, so long as he does not actually guess how it will end. The reader enjoys seeing the mother embarrassed, so long as he can say to himself, "Wow, what happens after that?" Suspense is almost always better than mere shocking surprise.

Characterization was not as strong as the circumstances called for. The girl's age is not crystal clear; the mother's background, as regards her preoccupation with men wasn't tangibly stated or implied. Yet this was an important premise. It could motivate and explain what she and her husband did & felt.

Jac Tweton also turned in a short short (a good one potentially, too) dealing with the relations between a man and wife. A strong, continuous line of interest was not stretched all through the story. At the beginning, for instance, the opening scene between the MC, Jane, and her husband, Stan, is allowed to trail off into other scenes; and the end is blurred. It should be a clean-cut scene,

between Jane and Stan, that shows that their love is whole and happy again, just as the opening one indicated it was about to break apart. Scenes need to be sharp at the edges, not blurred and fuzzy.

A good feature writer learns how to start each paragraph with an emphatic topic and a sentence that expresses the transition that the reader makes from the last paragraph. It dramatizes the change of pace, and leads the reader into the new paragraph. This develops, sustains and shows the varying facets of the idea expressed in the opening topic sentence and then prepares the reader for the following topic sentence. All of these topic sentences added up form the bone and skeleton, so to speak, of the article. One doesn't really need to read every word of the article to get its substance. The topic sentences—when added up—visualize the outline of the article, and the line of interest along which it runs as does a train on rails.

Scenes do exactly the same thing for fiction. Each scene is in a certain place in a story for a definite reason. It must build a continuous line of interest by leading from the previous scene to the next one. It must have a definite conflict or problem, and it must develop as many facets of this problem as possible. Its edge must be sharp. It gets into its act immediately without dilly-dallying, and it builds to a high point so that the author can cut cleanly from its snapper directly into the action of the next scene.

Every writer is something like an experienced vaudeville entertainer, who breaks the ice immediately, indicates the nature of his act, sweeps into it and takes the spectators along with him, and builds up to a stop-the-show sort of curtain. That sense of pace, of continuity and rising excitement is probably the hardest thing for inexperienced writers to visualize and achieve.

Evangeline Austin sent in a fairy story, a fable for adults about a little boy, a poor little rich boy. The point is good, but the story-teller tells it and moralizes all the way through, although it is seemingly written from the viewpoint of a little four year old. The weaknesses of course are that this little boy seems unbelievably mature for his age, and the story-teller makes these things happen to the characters. One cannot accept the miraculous change that takes place in the mother, or that relationships between various of the characters would develop in that way. It is illustrative drama, like a scene arranged in a shop window, plausible but not alive because the characters have no life of their own.

Julia Anna Cook showed us a very amusing, and well observed bit of farm life. It is a sketch now because it turns too much on the mishearing of a word. But it could be worked up into a story. It needs an MC, a deep-

## REWRITE

er plot that will turn on the emotional relations between the characters while making use of the situation created by the twisted hearing of a word. This story shows dramatically the necessity for using Viewpoint in a story. Mrs. Cook now has all of the other characters tell about the younger son, John. Yet the story is a poignant picture of that little boy's inexperience and immaturity in a grown-up world.

Some of the dialogue is too long, too. No characters must be allowed to talk in monologues. Dialogue is what its name implies: a rapid interchange between two or more characters. Fiction is a language and one needs to learn to speak it. One character puts over one idea; another character advances another facet of it, or a new one. Each represents a step forward in the movement of the story.

NEXT WORKSHOP ASSIGNMENT. (1) Send in one of your shorter stories or articles. (2) Or a problem in writing or selling that bothers you. I will comment on it (1) personally or (2) discuss it here in the Workshop.

Here is a wonderful opportunity for writers to get practical help at only the small cost of a few cents postage both ways. I am not able to give you detailed analysis. But there is no such clinic generally available to serious and ambitious writers. Make use of it, but treat it seriously and do not abuse it.

Deadline: Nov. 1st. No mss. without usual sese and a serious letter from you discussing the ms. or problem from your angle will be answered or returned.

## A STICKFUL OF NEWS AND MARKETS

Western Writers of America held their second annual convention in June. Considerable good news was announced. Popular Library is adding 3 new titles (Western) monthly up to April, 1956. Bantam Books is doubling "production of Westerns during the latter half-year of 1955." It is believed TV is forcing the movies to use better stories about "the real, working West." And a news agency manager states that there are not only 72,000, Americans who never read a book, but of the 300,000,000 paperbacks published last year, (that is the printed copies, of course) only 30% of the population bought them. And TV prices paid to authors are reported to have doubled in the last 18 months.

CATS, 4 Smithfield St. Pittsburg 22, Pa., says, "Except for true stories, illustrated, of cats and articles on health, we are overstocked."

Two Fellowship Awards: The Eugene F. Saxton Memorial Trust, 49 East 33rd St., NYC 16. The Houghton Mifflin Literary Fellowship Awards, 2 Park St., Boston 7, Mass. No closing dates.

## THE NEWS AT WCS HOUSE

The summer has been a busy one for Bill & Elva. A great Conference at Philadelphia in June. The most stimulating speakers we have yet heard there in 4 years of continued attendance. Then the Clark University Writers Conference, which Bill directed. A staff of 15 and 75 registered. Rev. Peter V. Rogers, editor of MARY IMMACULATE, Box 96, San Antonio, Texas spent a day with us. So also did Mrs. Winalee Gentry (See: news of a first novel on another page) from Jackson, Michigan. The New York, Boston and Worcester areas were all well represented, including several professional writers and many who have sold less regularly. Consensus was that the staff, in ability and willingness to give of its experience, was one of the best assembled at any conference recently.

The Clark Conference contended with a derailment that cut Worcester off from metropolitan NYC, and as we go to press Worcester has been declared a disaster area. We in the lower foothills of the White Mountains were well soaked with rain, but suffered no other damage. With luck we hope to head for the Maine Writers' Conference in two days, then a short vacation on Maine beaches. Mss. have piled in all summer. But with the exception of one or two long stories and a few poems, our desks are clear.

Our garden though smaller, has flourished and Billy has been playing Little League (on the farm team) ball, with Bill doing a number of odd jobs of coaching, umpiring & occasionally even throwing little Bill, a lefty, out at first. Elva complains in verse of being a baseball widow. For Billy has been bat-boy, and Bill a principal rooster for Lunenburg's Town Team, which boasts a big league bonus player in its roster.

Finally, one souvenir of the Clark University Writers' Conference which we surely treasure is a 2-hour taped recording of the Julie & Johnny Show in which they devoted most of their time to interviewing Allene Corliss about fiction writing. It was a very stimulating afternoon as I sat and listened to a taping of the following Saturday morning's broadcast. Julie Chase and Johnny Dowell in an engaging manner contributed ably to this good talk. And afterwards Julie gave me the duplicate we now have at WCS House.

## MORE NEWS AND MARKETS

POPULAR DOGS, John J. Guinther, 2009 Renstead St., Philadelphia 3, Pa., says, "We do little buying of outside material. Some light verse at nominal rates; also true articles, about dogs. We would be interested in studies of canine temperament, intelligence, etc. of a serious nature. Most of our material is supplied by individuals active in the breeding and exhibition of purebred dogs. We have a very large veterinary readership."

## REWRITE

### A PROJECT OF INTEREST TO WRITERS

Margaret Howard, Box 242, G.P.O., NYC 1, is planning to publish a new magazine for writers who are interested in "strengthening or improving their techniques. The new publication, MANUSCRIPT Magazine, a workshop magazine, is scheduled for January, 1956." Plan is to "prepublish stories, articles, poems, parts of longer works, so they may be given critical analysis before being sent to market."

Mss. are now being sought. "No fees are to be paid, nor are payments for the mss. to be expected. But mss. will be copyrighted, and all rights will remain with the authors. A very laudable intention is that this publication shall not be a vanity anthology. The price will be \$3 per year. "But is not necessary to be a subscriber to submit material." Miss Howard and her husband, A.N. Townsen, a printer, have assured me of that.

Note: I have pointed out to Mr. Townsen in my correspondence with him, that I have the certain feeling that mss. printed in his magazine cannot be reprinted in other periodicals. Most editors publish only "first run" material. But Elva has found in her REWRITE Poetry Workshop that poems, when drastically revised, can occasionally be published in other magazines. If the publisher is exactly informed in advance of the precise & complete circumstances, quite a few poems have graduated this way from Elva's clinic. Editors in general welcome the idea of getting good material.

But it seems to me that a magazine of the kind these people plan can be a very excellent practice medium for ambitious writers. "We always knew," Mr. Townsen, wrote to me a few days ago, "that MM could not become the organ of a mutual admiration society. Long before we queried people, we feared that this might be our Achilles heel. We have tried to be clear, and will be explicit (even more—soon) that we will not publish tripe for people just because they are subscribers. People are enthusiastic now, but we fear much of this enthusiasm will wear off as soon as we are forced to reject a lot of mss."

So goes a project of promise. We hope the writers who want to learn, will patronize a project like this, and not be selfish, sending only their worst and unsalable mss. in.

WEE WISDOM, Jane Palmer, Unity School of Christianity, Lee's Summit, Mo., celebrated its 62nd birthday in August, and also that of the founder, Mrs. Myrtle Page Fillmore. The issue contained 8 additional pages. Some of this magazine is written by regular contributors. But it is also an open market for poems and prayers, stories and activities. It is sometimes overstocked. "Up to teen age."

YOU, James E. Sweaney, same address. This is a companion magazine for teen agers. It, too, has a strong Christian emphasis.

### HOW FAR THAT LITTLE CANDLE COULD...

A great deal is being written and done at this time about exchange of persons all over the free world, and even across the various iron curtains and other artificial barriers raised by men. This seems to us one of the most effective roads to peace. If men of good will ever can get together and discuss their problems, or even work together, there is a better chance that they will not fight and indulge in negative pursuits. The positive, constructive and creative arts have a chance to flourish and develop.

At this season of the year as the busy activities of the winter begin, we often wish that this "exchange of persons" idea could be transferred and applied to writers' clubs. I sometimes think if all of these clubs could work together without losing their respective personalities, what a strong force they would represent! If there was a federation, let's say, of writers' clubs, as there is among the women's clubs, writers would not be nearly so helpless in the face of unfair or unjust treatment by editors. They could effect improvements in standards. They should be able to widen the range of reading, & so increase the demand for their product.

Even the occasional exchange of speakers, or delegates and members; joint workshops & discussions of mutual problems, would do so much for writers. That is one of the greatest benefits of writers' conferences. You widen your horizons and gain inspiration in seeing that other writers, even professionals face the same problems you do. Why not experiment with this idea this winter, when your club meets?

### NEWS OF THE WCS FAMILY

Frances Durland recently sold a story for the 7th time and another for the 8th. Shows what can be done with syndication if a writer works at it intelligently. The Methodist papers, CLASSMATE and TWELVE/FIFTEEN resell a considerable amount of the materials they buy to other (smaller) denominations.

Lillian Everts has been doing quite a bit of lecturing before writers clubs and other groups in the South.

Theda L. Pobst has "sold" poems to FLAME & QUICKSILVER. Avonne D. Ballin to: Waukegan NEWS-SUN. And Frances Anster to Poets Corner in The LIME. All good acceptances.

Mrs. Alice B. Morgan reports sale of "116 copies to 91 business executives" of her book on investment. Also a Boston class of 80 women.

Bessie Berg has had acceptances (poems) by: IDEALS, The LANTERN, CHROMOTONES, AM. BARD, The HUMANIST, Los Angeles EXAMINER, The San Francisco EXAMINER, STARLANES, etc.

Tell us about your market experiences.



## REWRITE

### LATE MARKET REPORTS ABOUT MARKETS

Of interest to writers is the anti-merger action brought by the Federal Trade Commission against the June purchase by Farm Journal, Inc. of BETTER FARMING, until recently the COUNTRY GENTLEMAN, oldest and 2nd largest magazine in the field. These two publications have 2,882,000 and 2,554,000 circulation respectively.

The FTC fears elimination of competition, possible elimination of BETTER FARMING, and elimination of potential competition. Among the next four magazines in the 6 largest, it is pointed out (1) PROGRESSIVE FARMER, FARM & RANCH, and SOUTHERN AGRICULTURIST are regional magazines in the South; and (2) CAPPEER FARMER and SUCCESSFUL FARMING have a limited national circulation, and are also regional in character. The last of these started in 1902, so that there have been no substantial national entries in the field in the last 50 years.

The GLOXINIAN, and also the HEMEROCALLIS, Peggie Schulz, 7714 Fairfield Road, N. Minneapolis 12, Minn., are interested in getting stories about their respective subjects and such related fields as collecting, fertilizers, insecticides and soils. Neither of these magazines pay, but they do give an author a by-line.

Peggie, a longtime REWRITE subscriber, is a widely published writer in the flower and horticulture field. She says: "My first garden story was for a non-profit-no-pay magazine. But editors of paying publications do read these magazines. One read my story. He asked me to do something for him, and since that time I've done dozens of features for him." Elvin McDonald, co-editor of the GLOXINIAN, a very young editor in Gray, Okla., is also a longterm subscriber to REWRITE, and a busy writer himself.

DOWN EAST, Camden, Maine, now in its second year, published this note in the August issue:

#### CONTRIBUTIONS WANTED

Anecdotes and stories—amusing, amazing, or otherwise of interest—are wanted for It Happened Down East. For each previously unpublished anecdote or story accepted for this department, DOWN EAST will pay \$5. Names of persons and places may be fictitious, but otherwise contributions must be substantially true. They can be tales of long ago or of recent times. The Editor of this department will seek to maintain a balance of the old and new, and perhaps a more important balance: laughs on summer people as well as on the State-of-Mainers. Contributions cannot be returned or acknowledged. Maximum length: 800 words. Payments made on acceptance. Address: It Happened Down East Editor, DOWN EAST MAGAZINE, Camden, Maine.

Dell Publishing Co., Frank Taylor (Books) Knox Burger (First Editions), 261 5th Ave., NYC 16, is quoted in the Aug. issue of Western Writers of America ROUNDUP, as having established the \$1,000 Annual Dell-Western Award for the "Best Western published during each calendar year by Dell." Reprints, too!

### MORE OPEN PRIZE AWARDS

The Harper \$10,000 Prize Novel Contest of 1956 opened on June 1st. In 1954 there were 850 mss. turned in. Address as above to Harper & Brothers, 49 East 33rd Street, NYC 16.

Indiana Council for Appreciation of Poetry, Clarence C. & Marie L. B. Adams, 7077 W. 24th Ave., Gary, Ind., is offering a \$25 award this year for poems in celebration of a State-wide observance of Poetry Day, on October 15th. Address for rules, as above.

Albert R. Korn is offering a similar \$100 prize in New York State. Not over 32 lines. Address Lane Van Hook, 154 Pearsall Drive., Mount Vernon, N. Y. Closes: Oct. 1st.

Annual Ellery Queen Mystery Stories Prize Contest, 471 Park Ave., NYC 22. A number of prizes for different lengths. Closes: October 20th.

BOYS' LIFE & Dodd, Mead & Co., 434 4th Ave, NYC 16, offer \$2,000 for a novel for boys in the 12-16 age group. Closes: Nov. 15th.

#### AVOID PAY-ON-PUBLICATION MAGS.

The editor who pays on publication is not the best kind to do business with. Many of these are kind and considerate. It is not a fault of their choosing that their business offices cannot build up enough working capital to permit them to pay on acceptance. A small minority of the editors in this classification are the ones who cause most of the trouble.

Nevertheless, in our experience, the pay-on-publication and/or the new magazine that is given a colorful, exciting write-up in a number of the writers' magazines, are nearly always the ones about which most amateur or inexperienced writers complain. And it's these from which it is hardest to get (1) an answer to letters; (2) a return of mss. and (3) a check, all in that order.

The small writer, discouraged by many rejections, leaps like a hungry trout at the fly of every new magazine. He feels that there, at long last, there will be room for mss. by him, however mediocre. He rarely looks over the set-up and tries to weigh whether a publisher is experienced, has capital, or is a fly-by-night. He does not size up realistically the depth of the market or the amount of the demand for new, inexperienced or unknown writers. He never catalogues the name of a bad acting editor filing it for use and avoidance when another new magazine is born.

It is nice to be welcomed heartily. But I believe with scrutiny writers can find markets that have been tried out and seasoned, and yet which are actively seeking material. It is better to make fewer sales and be certain a check will be forthcoming, than have dreams blow up in one's face.

## REWRITE

### MARKET REPORTS AND NEWS

ONE, Omar Bonderud, 57 East Main St., Columbus 15, Ohio, has a very helpful "Market-Information and rejection slip." Four pages, with a space for a brief comment on the ms. This is a magazine published for four Lutheran Church bodies, for teenagers and youth. It is aimed to help them achieve unity of faith and knowledge of the Son of God.

Uses Fiction: teenage everyday situations and problems. Maximum: 2,500 words.

Feature Articles: problems, personalities & interviews, etc. Uses 8x10 photos. Maximum: 2,000 words. Also sketches: "ONE-ettes, 400 words. Poetry: short, light verse.

Pays: two-thirds to 1c. a word. \$2 to \$5 for poetry, and \$5 to \$10 for photos, on Acc.

AUGUSTANA LUTHERAN CHURCH Story Papers, Doris Kanten, Rock Island, Ill., also has a rejection slip that carries a checklist for explaining why a ms. is returned. But on the one a writer sent to me, Miss Kanten kindly wrote a brief, but detailed reason why this ms. did not appeal to her.

Bettie Payne Wells, friend and an associate of Cecile Bonham, took over the latter's "Poet's Corner" column in the June issue of The Limb. (Graeme W. Henderson, Box 1870... Hollywood 28, Cal.) This magazine is an outgrowth of Ben S. Hunter's Night Owl program on KFI, Los Angeles. Poems are selected only from those read over the air by Ben.

The League of Vermont Writers' Summer Institute must have been a lively one, if one reads between the lines of Mary Pearl's mimeograph notes (4½ pages of them). A fifth page is devoted to names of new members and the suggestion that those interested in receiving LEAGUE LINES, enclose a \$2 member's fee to Mrs. Frances Fancher, trees., Mill Village, RFD, Rutland, Vt.

Many of the LWV members are professionals and about 60 of them turned out for the Summer Institute, a 2-day affair. Others wrote cheery messages of greeting. The University of Vermont plays host annually.

BOYS' LIFE, Boy Scouts of America, New Brunswick, New Jersey, issues a handsome 6-page leaflet about its editorial requirements. Its readers range from 8 to 18, an unusually wide spread. Material not limited to scouting. Asks carbon copies of accepted mss. The Magazine offers to send a sample copy. Basic rate: 5¢, with quality raising the rate. No poetry. Short articles and photo-feature material (this combination is preferred) in the "Duffle Bag" rates \$50 to \$100, depending on length.

Please Note. We are publishing an unusual amount of accurate, timely market reporting this month. Result of Elva's requests tying in with the Clark University Conference.

### PRIZES OPEN TO WRITERS

YOUNG PEOPLE, American Baptist Publication Society, 1703 Chestnut St., Philadelphia 3, has announced a Special Fiction Awards Program as a 75th anniversary celebration. The purpose is to stimulate the writing of short fiction "whose impact is in the area of Christian faith and experience. \$200 will be paid for the best religious story published during 1956; and \$100 and \$50 will be paid for the second and third best stories." Stories purchased for publication in 1956 will naturally be considered for the awards. These awards will be in addition to the magazine's regular rates, and will be paid subsequently. Stories between 2,000 and 2,500 words are to be submitted between Aug. 1, 1955 and July 1, 1956.

Yale Series of Younger Poets, Yale University Press, New Haven, Conn. This competition open to men and women under forty, who have not yet had a book of verse published, will be held again in 1956. Now is the time when young poets should send for the rules & get ready. Mss. are submitted between Feb. 1st & March 1st, 1956.

The PARIS REVIEW, 2 Columbus Circle, NYC 19, has announced a prize award sponsored by H. H., the Aga Khan. Unpublished short stories between 1,500 and 7,000 words in English are desired. Two prizes: \$300 & \$200. All entries must be marked "Contest" and submitted with the name of the author noted on a detachable piece of paper. This is a quality magazine, primarily interested in the work of "young" writers. Now in its 3rd year. Although this is an international contest, it is required that mss. be submitted to the NYC office. It is stated that non-winning mss. will be considered for publication at regular rates. The contest closes: Nov. 1, 1955. No mss. which are received after that date will be considered.

Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. has found that a new technique of publishing a first edition and circulating novels by new or relatively unknown writers in paperback form, has proved practical. The try-out with "Mine Boy" by Peter Abrahams sold out at \$1.25. So another (hard cover) edition will be printed, to sell at \$3.50. This experiment, if generally practiced, could mean an increased market for first novels of promise by unknown writers.

It is ironic that in this country, recognized as the greatest merchandising country in the world, we have been able to create a mass market for almost everything. But in so doing we have (1) too often substituted the cheap, easily worn out product for a lasting one; (2) priced right out of the market the live theater and now the serious novel; and (3) we have been unable to solve effectively the problem of surpluses. Our great symphony orchestras have to be subsidized on a charitable basis. It makes one wonder. How good is our merchandizing?

## REWRITE

### THE BOOKSHELF FOR WRITERS

**THE WORKING PRESS OF THE NATION.** Ed. Norman Seligman. Volume I, Newspaper and Allied Service Directory. Volume II, Magazine and Editorial directory. National Research Bureau (Burlington Iowa.) \$25 each. (The Bureau is offering a 10-day free-examination offer of \$35 for both.) This is a serious listing of practically all newspapers, popular & trade publications in the English-speaking world, that professional writers would want to familiarize themselves with. Not a market requirements list; but price, circulation and personnel are detailed. And an editorial analysis prepared by the editors themselves, is included. Very useful. A WRITERS' BOOK CLUB Selection.

**WRITERS—HERE'S YOUR BONUS.** Eloise N. Cozens. College Publishing Co. \$1. (Second Edition.) Although the title is not clear until you've read the first chapter, there is a lot of intelligent information here about all kinds, and many types of writing. Brief market suggestions at the end of each chapter. Author is a Southern teacher of writing.

**INDEXES & INDEXING.** Robert L. Collison. Ernest Benn, Ltd. \$2.50. (Distributed by John deGraf, Inc. NYC.) A useful little book on book and other types of indexing, published in England in 1953. It would be well to compare it with American books for changes and differences.

**LITERARY MARKET PLACE.** R. R. Bowker Co. \$5. The business directory of American book publishing. Not a complete market list, but it contains an immense amount of data on names and addresses, and its standard for accuracy is higher and wider than many of the market lists writers ordinarily buy. On file in many public libraries.

**NATIONAL DIRECTORY OF DISCOUNT DEALERS.** 2nd Edition. Hoge, Farrell, Inc. 599 Madison Ave. NYC. \$9.95. A list of 2,600 names with complete addresses, of leading discount houses that retail brand name and other hard-to-get merchandise.

**THE HEADLAND.** Carol Brink. The Macmillan Co. \$3.50. A story of two young Americans summering in France, who fall in love with contrasting French young people, with an additional English girl on the sidelines. Mrs. Brink could have made it easier reading for her readers by making the various "I" characters less talkative and reflective; and by holding in a bit her own deep love of France. The story gets lost at times.

**The WRITERS' BOOK CLUB.** This is an advisory service for readers and writers regarding books of interest and permanent worth. A book is not always new when we review it. We try to report good reading wherever we find it. During the War we sold books. Now we only review and recommend them. We are not influenced by any advertising. Our only interest is to advise and stimulate writers.

### BOOKS OF INTEREST TO WRITERS

**NEW VOICES 2: American Writing Today.** Ed. Don M. Wolfe. Hendricks House. \$5. This is the fourth in a series of books sponsored by the New School for Social Research, New York City. This one is national in scope. A commendable project which regrettably has used four different publishers to date. This is experimental writing, attempts on the parts of the writers to find themselves. Mr Wolfe has written a long and thoughtful introduction. Pearl Buck, Katherine Anne Porter, Maxwell Geismar and William Alfred have written four short essays on "How Does Talent Grow?" A lively book for student writers to ponder.

**PEACEFUL CONQUEST.** Kelsie Ramey Osborne. The Lewis and Clark Sesquicentennial Committee, Old Oregon Trail, Inc. \$1.00. This is an account of the famous Expedition by the executive secretary of Old Oregon Trail, Inc., who last year won the Durham Chap Book Award, an annual poetry prize offered by REWRITE & AMERICAN WEAVE Magazines at the University of New Hampshire Writers' Conference. Both by research and travel over the Trail, the author has prepared herself for this booklet, which she plans to expand into a book. It's an interesting and readable addition to the growing list of stories about Lewis & Clark and their great contribution to the history of America. A valuable reference.

**A ROOM IN PARIS.** Peggy Mann. Doubleday & Co. \$3.95. A frank, honest, well-written novel, the author's first, that unfortunately "explodes" and blows up in your face with an exceedingly over-reached for suspenseful solution. It proves again plot derives from the character relationships rather than contrived incident. It could have been plausible.

**FEW WERE LEFT.** Harold Rein. The John Day Co. \$3.50. If one cared to be cruel, he could dismiss this first novel with a wisecrack. Few readers have the curiosity to get beyond the singularly inauspicious and uncharacterizing opening. Surely the publisher should divide the blame for throwing a promising young author into the marketplace with so little to hook the reader.

**GANDHISM AND COMMUNISM.** Ramswarup. Jyoti Prakashan, 5/47 W.E.A., New Delhi 5, India. 12 Annas. This little paper back book, made of newspaper articles, is good reading. The author, disturbed by attempts to make Gandhi a stooge for Communist propaganda, does the essential task of relating one of the great holy men of all time to the eternal truths, and the practical commonsense for which the little man stood. It is logical in thought, timeless and universal in its application & exciting in its understanding. We of a free world can benefit even more than those from India and the confused, boiling melting-pot of the East.

**DAVY CROCKETT'S OWN STORY.** Citadel Press... \$3.50. A modern reprint of the three books, that he himself wrote. Lively and factual.



## REWRITE

### WHAT IS HAPPENING TO FICTION?

A great many writers are worrying regarding the future of fiction. It is true a decreased amount of fiction is being used and articles, often highly fictionalized, are replacing the stories that in former days occupied a major proportion of the space that the editors had to fill.

It is also true that a whole new world of conditions have been set up. The intensive competition of the mechanical arts, the very real competition against the drama of daily life and the rehashing, which seems tame by comparison, of wartime living and an age of violence, these are factors. But there is a greater one yet: the frustration of fiction writers in the face of such conditions. They appear unable to write really good fiction. Much of what does get published in the magazines and between book covers simply lacks the quality and the craftsmanship to hold a sizable segment of the reading public. Mrs. Allene Corliss spoke of this at the Clark University Writers' Conference. Veteran serial writer and skilled technician that she is, she says she finds it difficult to finish a lot of the magazine fiction she reads today. "I simply do not care enough about the characters," she said. "And that of course is a devastating criticism in itself."

Grace Holliday Scott made an interesting, worthwhile comment in a recent letter to us about this matter. "Goodness," she exclaimed, "the other writer's magazines seem very sure that fiction is on the way out. But do you believe that?"

"It seems to me that fiction sometimes is able to tell things much better than factual writing does. I think fiction is to fact as poetry is to prose. The vehicle between what we are and what we aspire to. Human nature invented fiction and I don't believe it will scrap it."

The world moves in cycles. I have watched several of these turn full circle in my life. I believe that when we can develop writers, who have the ability to turn out good story material in written form, you will see that tide can change and flood in once more. It has been said that people live stories in a time of stress, but that they write them in times of relative peace and calm. There is much truth in that.

Recently, GOOD HOUSEKEEPING has commented somewhat puckishly on the table of contents page about its own fiction. In the August issue, for example, it ran this note about "A Man of Confidence" by Jack Finney: "Of Mr. Finney this can be said, and it can be said of few other contemporary writers: He never writes an ordinary story. He thinks. He plots. Would to heaven that other professionals in the realm of fiction would go and do likewise!"

And to make certain that the point is not

missed, Margaret Cousins and her staff make it again regarding Rona Jaffe's story, "Nobody Tells Me." "This newcomer, like Jack Finney, has a sense of narration, story line. Long may she retain it!"

So you see the editors, too, have moments of desperation. Personally, we believe the point made is vital to good story-telling & reader enjoyment. But we question the quality and craftsmanship of these two stories. We would be interested to receive comments. It will do any of you who take the time, an immense amount of good to study these yarns and make up your minds about them.

There is a need for much better fictional writing than we are now getting. But it is likely to arrive only when authors and editors take their craft more seriously. When they no longer think and feel "off the top."

### COMMENT ON THE PUBLISHING SCENE

In a publisher's catalog recently appeared a biography of Phyllis A. Whitney, popular writer of children's stories. It is interesting to see how her career built up. It started after high school by her writing at least 100 short stories for church school & pulp magazines. She turned to writing books for children, which she has made her specialty. She wrote a book about writing (it was on this subject naturally). She has reviewed books for young people, and edited children's book pages for the Chicago SUN & the Philadelphia INQUIRER. Now she teaches this same subject at N.Y. University. A good illustration of how an author is made, parlaying an interest into a vocation.

How to Get Things Done. Several years ago in the READER'S DIGEST appeared a short article called "Stop Dodging". It was part of a chapter of a book by Robert Thomas Allen. The advice it gave was particularly appropriate for writers. Mr. Allen told about a man who always said to people who told him they always had wanted to do something, "Why don't you?"

Mr. Allen recognized human limitations but pointed out that the customary working hour stint is decreasing, yet time is just as unavailable now. We have the time, but do we use it wisely?" he asked embarrassingly. He pointed out the things you could do in that famous 15 minutes a day or while commuting, or getting up an hour early.

Inertia, or the faculty of just never being able to get started, he said, was one of the worst enemies. Mr. Allen said the answer to that is to start, to become involved, become interested in almost any subject. He told a story of being assigned to write a story about bulls. He considered it a dull subject until he began to research. Dull or interesting, it is largely up to you. Another hurdle is fear (I can't do that!) Try it! How do you know until you have become involved?

## REWRITE

### REPORTS DIRECT FROM THE EDITORS

Augustana Lutheran Church, Board of Parish Education, 2445 Park Ave., Minneapolis, Minn., publishes an unusually clear-cut, well organized folder, "Suggestions to our writers." It covers 'TIL 8 STORIES, JUNIOR LIFE and TEEN TALK. Pays \$5 per 1,000 words on Acc., "For most copy. Poetry 25¢ for 4 lines. We will consider purchasing second rights to material already printed." Also buys photos.

If you plan to write for these magazines, or others listed here, send for the folders before you submit mss.

Baptist Sunday School Board, Div. of editorial Service, 161 8th Ave., N., Nashville 3, Tenn., publishes a very explicit folder, "A Word to Writers" about STORYTIME (4 to 8 years), The SENTINEL (9 to 12), and UPWARD, the last being for children 13 to 16. Pays 1¢ per word approximately, about 20th of the month following acceptance.

REDBOOK, Wade H. Nichols, Jr., fiction ed. Lillian Kastendike, feature ed. Florence Somers, 230 Park Ave., NYC 17, recently sent us a 3-page memo: "Background information on the 1955 winner of the Benjamin Franklin Award" and also a 3-page memo about its fiction requirements. Both of these stressed REDBOOKS interest in "Young Adults" (18 to 35). Emphasizing "an exceptional utilization of the 'personal identification' editorial approach, in which articles and stories are directed, (and very intensively. Ed.) toward the immediate personal preoccupations of readers (to their health, homes, children, finances and emotional relationships).

Fiction in REDBOOK is "weighted" in favor of women readers. Realistic stories, having real problems, which the characters face in an honest manner, are what the editors want. But some of the situations they offer as desirable examples seem to this editor sensational and verging on Confession plots.

#### HOW TO SAY FREE

We are extremely careful with the use of the word "FREE." We do not use the phrase, "FREE —AT NO EXTRA COST," because that isn't FREE. It is not often that we offer the investor a portion of our services FREE.

#### PONDER THIS

The large and powerful Wall Street business statistical firm of Standard & Poor's, Inc. offered some excellent advice to investors in writing and

selling counsel recently in the "box" above. Few of the advertising "critic-agents" consider this philosophy good business. Vanity publishers also weight the cost of the publishing they do for you with the cost of the promotion they do to "sell" you. One subsidy printer was frank in telling me how high priced expenditures were passed along to the ultimate consumer. Several vanity publishers have appeared on writers' conference staffs this summer at their own expense. If your book is published by them this winter you'll pay the cost of their plane and train trips and folders about "subsidy publishing".

CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE, Ms. Editor, 740 North Rush St., Chicago 11, Ill., has a neat, outlined page giving its market requirements.. It is the weekly official organ of the Methodist Church. Uses little fiction, except a good seasonal family story at Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter, and short-shorts for the children's dept. Articles are the big, primary requirement, plus a little short poetry (maximum, 18 to 24 lines). Pays 1¢ per word for prose and fiction. 2¢ for quality material. Minimum of \$2.50 for poetry.

"Rhyme Does Pay", Station WBBM, Al Bland, 410 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago 11, Ill. As of July 25, 1955, this program went off the air. Earlier, we reported in good faith concerning this poetry outlet. Mr. Budd Blume told us jingles and rhymes from professional poets would be welcome. He neglected to inform us all mss. would become the property of the station. However, Mr. Blume, director of public relations for WBBM, and a professional, too, himself (he writes science fiction stories), has a sympathetic feeling for authors. So he advises us: "As far as 'ownership' of the mss. submitted goes, let it be known to your readers, that if their mss. were NOT used and if they have not received a check for \$2 or \$5 from Station WBBM, they may assume that their mss. were not used and have been destroyed." This frees them to submit these mss. elsewhere.

Thanks to Maxwell W. Cook, editor of a provocative Texas magazine, The PORT ARTHURIAN, and a Lunenburg boy a long way from home, we chanced to see this quote from Governor Allan Shivers' commencement address at the University of Southern California:

"If we demand tolerance from others as the mark of our freedom, we should not be intolerant."  
Next page please

### COLLECT, CLASSIFY, ELIMINATE

Everyone has those non-creative days when he can't put a thought on paper. But do not waste them sitting at the typewriter, moaning, "I can't write." Spend the time planning for the time when you will be creative. Fill your sub-conscious up with ammunition. Remember how the cigarette and candy machines that vend automatically, have to be loaded? Your mind and emotions act the same way. They will work for you if you feed them.

It has been said that the largest part of imagination is learning how to put the odd, strange ideas in familiar ways and the familiar facts in fresh ways. Or blending some of both in an informative or inspirationally novel manner. Therefore, your biggest job is to organize effectively and then express your ideas and emotions as forcefully as you can. The second half of this task is dependent to a considerable extent on the first. So if you go over your notes, put two & two together, you automatically begin to think, and start to fire the furnace. Soon you begin to smolder, and then take fire.

## REWRITE

erant of their views. If we demand the right to speak freely, meet freely, worship freely, we have responsibility to accord the same privilege to others."

This code, which is a rephrasing of the ancient Golden Rule, is the very corner-stone of freedom of the press. It is the patent & license power under which every author must of necessity live and write. It is all the more precious because it is self-imposed, & it is eternally two-pronged: it extends the privilege of free expression, but as a corollary it demands responsibility and maturity.

In this respect it is interesting to note that the Fund for the Republic, a subsidiary of the Ford Foundation, presented \$5,000 to the Quakers of Plymouth Meeting, Penn., for supporting their librarian in the face of a public outcry of intolerant disapproval. The Quakers stood firm, convinced that to everyone, not just a chosen few, belongs the spiritual right to change association, and mend one's ways. They were willing to allow time to be the ultimate judge of a human being's sincerity.

And it is also welcome news that the Children's Librarians Association of the American Library Association at the annual meeting in convention of the ALA, announced the formation of the Frederic G. Melcher Scholarship Fund. The scholarship will be awarded each year to a candidate interested in preparing for children's librarianship in an accredited library school.

Fred Melcher is president of the R.R. Bowker Co., publishers of the PUBLISHERS' WEEKLY and a beloved dean of the publishing and editing trades. As delegates to the Wachusett Library Group meeting last spring, Bill and Elva were alerted to the closely secret. We know of no one better deserving of such high and affectionate praise. A book of names has been presented to Mr. Melcher. A second list of donors is now being compiled. If you desire to give, consult your public library.. A signally worthy project.

### TWO COURSES AT CLARK UNIVERSITY

In the fall semester Bill has been invited to teach "Non-fiction Writing" in the Evening College at Clerk University. "Fiction Writing" will be his subject in the second, i.e., spring term. Both courses give credit towards the B. S. degree.

Naturally, much of Bill's interest, background preparation and practical experience in these courses will flow over into REWRITE. He will thus be able to help the Magazine's readers living far beyond the campus. Bill is looking forward to this opportunity

In the December issue we will try to give our readers some of the practical ideas and valuable experiences we gathered at the Maine Writers' Conference.

## CAPITALIZE YOUR TALENT!

How many writers ever think of their profession as a business requiring capital investments? Yet you cannot break into a professional magazine or newspaper without the all important typewriter. Research requires an investment in travel, files, etc. A library is well nigh essential. The real professional who devotes full time to his job, needs an office, or the equivalent. He has a right to charge for such necessary helps. For the light and heat and secretarial help to run and staff it.

Obviously, a writer needs also the advice and assistance of an accountant to tell him how to claim such capital expenses and regular costs of doing business. And methods of charging off over the years the cost of the wear and tear of tools that must be replaced. But the point is clear, that the writer has legitimate expenses he has every right, and duty to himself and family, to place in his accurate accounts, so that he may charge them against income in his income taxes.

Business has begun to use a coined phrase having to do with the development and use of creative capital. Capital, they say, is only truly creative when it is not lying idle. And when it is being used creatively to develop new ideas, new aids to better living, and extensions of the ways of life we in America accept as normal. These are ideas to ponder. Ideas for writers to turn over, and apply to their own profession, from which it is obvious the businessmen have derived the basic philosophy.

There is no better time to put such ideas into practice than the present. It has been said of the president of the union of steel workers of America, that he always "travels first class". That is something far too many writers do not do. Money is not everything. Indeed, with all of it in the world, talent is still required to make a first class author. And it is ironical that too many good writers in this country have been ruined by their first taste of success, their initial book-of-the-month club or Hollywood contract and the first enervating whiff of popularity.

Yet it is also true that if you do not in all seriousness value yourself and whatever talent you may have, it is unlikely that anyone else will either. This does not mean, I want to insist, that you should go through-out life browbeating editors, trying forever to sell one major opus, or demanding the highest price you can extort for every word you set down on paper. It does mean for you to have a proper perspective on your work & respect for your talent.

Remember that whoever you are, you are unique. Your talent you have may be large or small, but somewhere there is a niche which you can fill. And if you do that as well as you can, you will not have written in vain.



## REWRITE

### MERCHANDISE YOUR TALENT

Under the heading "Merchandise Your Publicity" the Benn Hall Associates News Letter, house organ of a very skilled publicity organization, we saw a practical suggestion a writer could use occasionally. When you get a "publicity break", make it known to editors or other personnel whom you are seeking to impress, by means of a reprint. BHA suggests that an offset job "costing only \$20, can do the task very neatly...In connection with such articles, sometimes it is very useful to send them to appropriate newspapers, with a memo that they may be helpful either for immediate use or for future reference in their 'morgues'."

Publicity is a great weapon when properly used. People who are unfamiliar with your work, can be impressed by the handles to your name. It helps them to evaluate your stuff, when it crosses their desks. It makes you a person instead of a name when they have not met you. Frequent mention of you in the right places keeps your name and product in front of the public. This builds readers for you, and establishes a favorable climate for the material you write. In this competitive and high pressure world we live in, millions of dollars and hours of time are spent to keep you reading, viewing TV, going to the horse racing tracks or doing it yourself at home. Sometimes the product is a time-waster or a minor drug that can be bad for you, but publicity keeps it in front of you. And if the product fills a need, good or bad, continued iteration swells the public for it.

But here is the catch so far as it affects authors. Publicity never takes the place of the writing you must do to earn it! There's an art in placing and timing your publicity. Some writers think if they get enough of it they will without effort become another one of the big shots. They do not realize all of these once were nameless ones like them and fighting tooth-and-nail for a place-in-the-sun, too. Publicity can help you if you are already moving forward with something good. But bad publicity, or good publicity that's badly timed, can back-fire. Suppose you get a big fanfare for a lucky break and then do not deliver the goods next time, or prove to be a one ms. author, or show yourself to be someone who merely loves the limelight. It hurts you more than it helps.

It is unfortunate that this is a snob appeal world we live in. The person who doesn't need publicity, or at least appears not to, is often the one who gets the most. Because Elva and I are among the very few professional writers' counsellors who never advertise, many kind editorial friends constantly mention us in print. But even this kind of publicity can hurt writers, if it seems merely to be of the puff and pat-each-other-on-the-back variety. Good publicity, and the better columnists prove no exception to the rule, succeeds because it is essentially based on

good news values of timeliness and a sense, in the best meaning of the word, of story significance. Our 1st Annual Clark University Writers' Conference was a case in point. We got wonderful publicity because it was news (the first conference ever held in the area) and seemed important (editors everywhere appeared to agree that we combined big names, good teacher material, and some lucky news-breaks: several of our staff had books, stories, etc. published in time to be appropriately newsworthy.) If editors want to write about you, you don't need to appear egotistic in assisting them to do so.

There is one final and collateral angle to this business. One of the commonest problems we run into is that of the author who would like an agent, to take over the time consuming task of "selling my work." The idea being that if the author could concentrate on the important factor of writing, he can produce more. The fly in that ointment is that the authors who are dreaming of an ideal ivory tower, are generally the ones who need to know more instead of less about markets.

I have yet to see a good author who merely writes and lets his agent do all the selling. And this does not mean an author is commercial. Allene Corliss disclaimed detailed knowledge of markets. She referred to last-minute trends, tomorrow's immediate requirements of individual editors. But she emphasized the need of reading mass. She admitted her own experience of twenty years of talking with editors, thinking the way they do, and being familiar with the likes and obvious dislikes of readers.

Being close to your general markets gives you ideas for new stories. Every writer has continually to effect the honest and craftsman-like compromise between what he considers a good story, or something he desires to write about and what he believes readers are likely to find interesting. The danger that you face in trying to publicize yourself is the same one you face in trying to delegate entirely your selling problems to an agent. You begin to think too much in terms of "me, me, me" instead of "you, you, you."

Finally, while so many inexperienced writers tend to think more in terms of markets & selling than producing, few of them consider the importance of merchandising well the ideas and stories, etc., i.e., the product, that they have to sell. Benn Hall I am certain, would be the first to tell writers to have the best product they can muster, to offer editors. Next, they should package it as neatly and effectively as possible. An editor is always impressed by a ms. that looks clean, neat, well typed so competently produced that it could be sent to the printer, without a lot of editorial work being done. Editors also respect a writer who considers his by-line as a trade-mark worthy of being guarded well. Don't cultivate eccentricity. Do make editors remember you as a Person.